TO: All Destination Points
FROM: U.S. Department of Education
DATE: March 2012
RE: EDconnect 8.1 for Windows

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of EDconnect version 8.1 for Windows. The software and user documentation is available on the Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site, located at http://fsadownload.ed.gov.

EDconnect 8.1 is available as a single downloadable file, EDconn810.exe. See the *EDconnect 8.1 Installation and User Guide*, also available on the FSAdownload Web site, for detailed installation information.

EDconnect 8.1 is not an upgrade to earlier versions of EDconnect. All users must perform a Local Install for stand-alone installations or a Network Install followed by a Workstation Install for network installations.

EDconnect 8.1 contains the following changes and enhancements:

- All EDconnect users are *required* to install EDconnect 8.1 by May 27, 2012. After this date, users will no longer be able to connect to their SAIG Mailbox(es) using the previous versions of EDconnect. This change is to ensure compliance with the government-mandated Security Requirements for Cryptographic Modules (FIPS140-2) standard, Advanced Encryption Standard (AES).

- All EDconnect 8.1 users must be enrolled in the new EDconnect Entitlement service before they will be able to use the software. Refer to the February 10, 2012 announcement for detailed instructions on completing this process.

- EDconnect 8.1 requires users to log in using an FSA User ID rather than a local user name. This change is part of the process to bring EDconnect behind Federal Student Aid's Access and Identity Management System (AIMS) and is another step toward our goal of providing a "single sign-on" process for users of multiple systems. Through AIMS, authorized users are able to log in once to access multiple Federal Student Aid systems rather than needing to log in multiple times using various authentication methods. Refer to the February 10, 2012 announcement for detailed instructions on completing the FSA User ID registration process.

- The installation of EDconnect 8.1 requires that the software administrator add each user's FSA User ID to the software and associate it with the user's profile. After this step has been completed, the user will be able to access and use the new version of the software. Complete instructions for installing the software is described in the *EDconnect 8.1 Installation and User Guide*.

- EDconnect 8.1 includes functionality to support Two Factor Authentication (TFA), a security initiative described in a [January 13, 2012 announcement](#). Through TFA, when logging in to EDconnect, an authorized user will be required to enter their FSA User ID and password as well as provide a One-Time Password (OTP). The OTP will be generated by a registered token device that is in the physical possession of the user. We are in the process of a phased distribution of tokens and token information to schools and will communicate directly with the Primary Destination Point Administrator (PDPA) at each school regarding required use of the tokens.

- EDconnect 8.1 requires that a user be connected to the Internet prior to logging in.

- EDconnect 8.1 allows connections to Federal Student Aid servers only. This change will have no impact on users of EDconnect.

- Windows 7 is a supported platform for EDconnect 8.1.

- Special characters are now accepted when entering a username. E.g. John.O'mally.fsa

- The "unattended transfer user ID" check box has been disabled for users logging in for the first time to set up their profile.

- The Network Install has been updated to fix an issue with the EDconnect 8.0 installation.

- The EDconnect Install Guide, Desk Reference, and Error Codes documents have been consolidated into one master document called the *EDconnect Installation and User Guide*. This document consolidates the information previously found in the three separate documents and has been updated to incorporate the changes and enhancements described in this letter. The *EDconnect Installation and User Guide* is available from the [FSAdownload Web site](#).

- The FSA User Password must now be encrypted (encrypted password provided on the User Properties | Identity dialog box) in .imp files used for batch mode transmission for increased security. This will prevent unauthorized users from using the FSA User ID and FSA User Password information in that file to gain access to EDconnect.

- Failed password change requests are automatically removed from the Transmission Queue.

- EDconnect 8.1 supports users with several mailboxes set up in one EDconnect database by only allowing send and receive requests to be transmitted for the TG ID associated with the FSA User who is logged on, regardless of how many requests by other users are in the queue.

- When an invalid file name is chosen for a Transmission Queue record, the correct field is now highlighted. In addition, a dialog box appears prompting the user to select a valid file.

- The EDconnect .imp file header format has been updated and will require users to modify their existing header setup to match EDconnect 8.1 requirements. Specific requirements can be found under section 5.1.11.1 in the *EDconnect 8.1 Installation and User Guide*.

Installing EDconnect 8.1

Detailed instructions for installing and using EDconnect 8.1 are described in the *EDconnect Installation and User Guide, Version 1.0*. The guide is available on the FSADownload Web site, located at **fsadownload.ed.gov**.

Contact Information

If you have questions about this information, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806) or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.